

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 CANBER 00940 190326Z

62

ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

----- 084073

R 190145Z FEB 74

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2569

INFO AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 0940

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, VN, AS

SUBJ: COMMENTS OF AUSTRALIAN CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN HANOI

1. SUMMARY: IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF FEB 18 BRUCE WOODBERRY, AUSTRALIAN CHARGE IN HANOI, GAVE BLEAK PICTURE OF LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS FACING FOREIGN EMBASSIES IN DRV. HE SAID HE HAD IMPRESSION DRV NOT RPT NOT CONSIDERING MAJOR NEW OFFENSIVE IN SOUTH. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF HAD EXTENDED LUNCHEON CONVERSATION FEB 18 WITH AUSTRALIAN CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN HANOI, BRUCE WOODBERRY, WHO IS CURRENTLY ON LEAVE IN CANBERRA PRIOR TO RETURN TO POST IN EARLY MARCH. WOODBERRY, WHOM EMBOFF HAD KNOWN AS DIPLOMATIC COLLEAGUE IN SAIGON IN EARLY 1960'S, COMMENTED FRANKLY ON HIS IMPRESSIONS OF DRV OVER PAST SIX MONTHS.

3. AUSTRALIANS ARE EVIDENTLY VERY POORLY HOUSED IN THONG NHAT (FORMERLY CONTINENTAL) HOTEL, HANOI, WHERE THEY HAVE NO OFFICE SPACE AND MUST WORK IN THEIR ROOMS. THEY RECEIVE ONLY UNCLASSIFIED TELS AND DO WHATEVER CLASSIFIED REPORTING AS SEEMS INDICATED DURING PERIODIC VISITS TO VIENTIANE. FOOD AND LIVING CONDITIONS ARE NOTABLY WORSE THAN WOODBERRY HAD EXPECTED, AND AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY STAFF HAS HAD STEADY EXPERIENCE WITH DYSENTERY, WORMS, ETC. SINCE THERE IS NOW NO RPT NO PROSPECT OF IMPROVEMENT IN LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS, EMBASSY STAFF WILL BEGIN TO BE REPLACED IN NEXT SEVERAL MONTHS, IN ORDER TO STAGGER REPLACEMENTS

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 CANBER 00940 190326Z

AND ENSURE SOME CONTINUITY. WOODBERRY WILL REMAIN IN HANOI TILL

JULY, 1974, BUT HAS NO RPT NO INTEREST IN EXTENDING.

4. UNTIL ACCOMMODATIONS AND OFFICE ARRANGEMENTS IMPROVE, WOODBERRY COMMENTED THAT THERE IS LITTLE PROSPECT THAT AN AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR WILL BE NAMED TO HANOI.

5. WOODBERRY SAID THAT AUSTRALIAN CONTACT WITH DRV GOVERNMENT IS WHOLLY WITH CHIEF OF ASIA III SECTION IN MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS. THERE IS SOME CONTACT AS WELL WITH CONSULAR SECTION OF MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, AND DAY TO DAY LIVING PROBLEMS ARE HANDLED WITH DEPARTMENT FOR SUPPORT OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS, WHOSE RELATIONSHIP TO MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS IS NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR, ACCORDING TO WOODBERRY. MAIN PROBLEM SEEMS TO BE THAT THOSE IN ASIA III WHO MIGHT LIKE TO BE HELPFUL TO FOREIGN MISSIONS HAVE NO APPARENT AUTHORITY OVER THOSE ACTUALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ACCOMMODATION, BOTH PERSONAL AND OFFICIAL, FOR FOREIGN MISSIONS. DRV OFFICIALS ARE "CORRECT" BUT UNHELPFUL, IN GENERAL.

6. ALTHOUGH AUSTRALIAN AID TO NORTH VIET-NAM IS SO FAR ONLY MODEST (ABOUT A\$600,000 IN ROOFING MATERIALS), AUSTRALIANS APPEAR TO BE TREATED ON SAME AUSTERE BASIS AS OTHER MISSIONS, INCLUDING SWEDES, WHO ARE TRYING TO RUN US\$35 MILLION AID PROGRAM. SWEDISH AMBASSADOR HAS ONLY TWO HOTEL ROOMS (FOR HIMSELF AND FEMALE SECRETARY) AND HAS BEEN REFUSED THIRD HOTEL ROOM FOR USE AS OFFICE. ACCORDING TO WOODBERRY, COMMUNIST BLOC, INCLUDING CUBAN, EMBASSIES ARE NOT NOTABLY BETTER TREATED, THOUGH GENERAL RULE IS THAT EMBASSIES LONGER IN HANOI HAVE SLOWLY IMPROVED THEIR POSITION. BRITISH EMBASSY IS PROBABLY BEST HOUSED, BUT THIS IS NO HELP TO ANNOYING PROBLEM THAT AMBASSADOR FAWCETT, WHO ARRIVED HANOI JAN 23, HAS SO FAR NOT BEEN ALLOWED TO PRESENT CREDENTIALS AND, IN DRV EYES, HAS NO STATUS WHATEVER.

7. WOODBERRY SAID THAT ACCESS TO HAIPHONG IS OCCASSIONALLY POSSIBLE, THROUGH SPECIAL PERMITS, AND AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY FURNITURE WAS RECEIVED IN THIS WAY. WOODBERRY UNDERSTANDS THAT HARBOR IS HEAVILY CONGESTED.

8. WHILE DISCLAIMING ANY GREAT AMOUNT OF KNOWLEDGE, WOODBERRY SAYS THAT HE HAS IMPRESSION THAT DRV IS NOT RPT NOT ON VERGE OF MAJOR ASSAULT AGAINST SOUTH VIET-NAM, THOUGH HE ANTICIPATES  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 CANBER 00940 190326Z

THAT NIBBLING TACTICS IN SOUTH WILL CONTINUE. IN RESPONSE TO QUESTION, HE SAID HE HAS IMPRESSION SOVIETS HAVE MADE IT CLEAR TO DRV THAT MAJOR OFFENSIVE AGAINST SOUTH WOULD NOT MEET WITH SOVIET APPROVAL AND THAT REPLACEMENT OF MUNITIONS THEREBY EXPENDED WOULD BE DIFFICULT. HOWEVER, WOODBERRY SAYS HE HAS IMPRESSION OF CONTINUED UNITY OF DRV LEADERSHIP AND OF A DESIRE TO COMPLETE TASK THEY BEGAN, EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE NO LONGER CLEAR AS TO HOW THIS IS TO COME ABOUT.

GREEN

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, POLITICAL SITUATION  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 19 FEB 1974  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** cunninfx  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1974CANBER00940  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** P740145-2224  
**From:** CANBERRA  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
**ISecure:** 1  
**Legacy Key:** link1974/newtext/t19740223/aaaaavjh.tel  
**Line Count:** 116  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION SS  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** cunninfx  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 11 JUN 2002  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <11 JUN 2002 by elbezefj>; APPROVED <02 DEC 2002 by cunninfx>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** COMMENTS OF AUSTRALIAN CHARGE D'AFFAIRES IN HANOI  
**TAGS:** PFOR, VN, AS, (WOODBERRY, BRUCE)  
**To:** n/a  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005